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1962/11/20

DRAFT PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT FOR PRESS CONFERENCE.TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1962

It has been over two weeks since I last reported to the American people on Cuba. Today I want to review on how far we have come -- and how far we have yet to go.

The understandings between Chairman Khrushchev and myself set forth in our letters of October 27 and 28 contained the following elements:

1. The Soviet Union would remove offensive weapons systems from Cuba.
2. This would be done under appropriate United Nations observation and supervision.
3. The Soviet Union would undertake, with suitable safeguards, to halt the further introduction of such weapons systems into Cuba.
4. Upon the establishment of adequate arrangements through the United Nations to ensure the carrying out and continuation of these commitments, the United States would remove the quarantine and give assurances against an invasion of Cuba.

As has previously been announced, there is evidence that all the known IREB and IREB sites in Cuba have been dismantled. Missiles and associated equipment were loaded on Soviet ships which have departed Cuba. These ships have, with the cooperation of the Soviet Union, been inspected at sea from United States naval vessels and it has been confirmed that the number of missiles reported by the Soviet Union as having been brought into Cuba, which

basely corresponds to our own information, are, in fact, now on board Soviet

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also proceeding toward the Soviet Union.

Chairman Khrushchev has also now agreed that all of the B-26 bombers in Cuba will be removed within the next _____ weeks. The Soviet Government has also agreed that all nuclear weapons have been removed from Cuba. It has further stated that it will not reintroduce offensive weapons into Cuba.

This partial Soviet fulfillment of the understanding embodied in the exchanges between Chairman Khrushchev and myself is in itself of major importance, and accordingly I have given instructions to lift the quarantine which was imposed October 23.

However, what has been done thus far is short of complete fulfillment of the understanding. In the first place, the United Nations has not been put in a position where it could verify that all offensive weapons have been removed from Cuba. The Cuban Government has rejected requests by the Secretary General of the United Nations to establish arrangements for such verification.

In addition, the Cuban Government has also rejected safeguards against the future introduction into Cuba of offensive weapons.

That Government must, therefore, bear responsibility for thus frustrating the achievement of a distinct step forward in preserving peace in the Hemisphere.

It is the intent of the United States Government that the basic conditions of the original agreement be fulfilled. It does not propose that there be any doubt that the threat of offensive weapons in Cuba has been removed.

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continue to be removed, for, as I said on September 13, "this country will do whatever must be done to protect its own security and that of its allies."

I have, therefore, instructed the Secretary of Defense to continue such surveillance as is required in the absence of the other safeguards agreed upon between Chairman Khrushchev and myself. This is being done in conformity with the CAS Resolution of October 23.

In the absence of necessary safeguards, there is no occasion for formal assurances on the subject of invasion. But the fact is that we do not want to be forced to invade Cuba. As I said on September 13, "we shall neither initiate nor permit aggression in this Hemisphere." If offensive weapons systems are removed, and kept out of this Hemisphere in the future -- if there is no effort to export aggressive Communist purposes from Cuba -- and if there is no interference from Cuba with our own security, there can be peace in the Caribbean, and that is what this Government wants.

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DRAFT PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT

It has been over two weeks since I last reported to the American people on Cuba. I would like, today, to submit an "interim report" on how far we have come -- and on how far we have yet to go.

The first phase of the crisis, which began with the introduction and discovery of Soviet offensive weapons into Cuba, is now nearing its end. The missiles have already departed. Premier Khrushchev has agreed to remove the IL-28 jet bombers from Cuba within the next two weeks. We, in turn, have agreed to remove our quarantining to signify our satisfaction that the Soviet Union has complied with the essential elements of its pledged withdrawal of offensive weapons.

Partially behind us then is a Cuban crisis of worldwide significance, caused solely -- and deliberately -- by the introduction of offensive weapons into this hemisphere by the Soviet Union. This irresponsible act sowed, throughout the world, suspicion of all Soviet declarations and intentions. These inescapable conclusions cannot, should not, and will not be easily forgotten.

In consequence, the vigilance of the United States -- and indeed of the entire free world -- has advanced to a point from which withdrawal is no longer either practical or desirable. Yet neither the United States, nor any other nation, can in its own self-interest live continuously in a world where war seems momentarily imminent. Some, but by no means all, of the explosive danger has now been eliminated with the removal of the Russian missiles and bombers.

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not shield its problems which are equally serious, if not equally explosive.

The Soviet Union has left ground to air missiles in Cuba which although defensive in character continue to pose a threat to our C-130-backed air reconnaissance flights. MIG 21's, heavy Russian tanks, even tactical missiles which can carry nuclear warheads twenty-five to thirty miles, all remain to bolster the Castro regime against its own people.

Premier Khrushchev's prompt removal of Russia's offensive weapons in compliance with his promise of October 26 was both statesmanlike and commendable. But Cuba's refusal to permit the verification and inspection promised as well will, inevitably, bestir doubts even in the minds of those who wish to believe that the Soviet Union has in fact removed its entire offensive nuclear arsenal.

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The presence of Soviet offensive weapons systems in Cuba brought to a climax the tension in this Hemisphere that has existed and grown since Dr. Castro assumed power in Cuba and aligned that unhappy nation with the Sino-Soviet powers. Long before the Soviet Union, in collusion with the Castro Government, secretly placed nuclear weapons on Cuban soil, the OAS member nations expressed their deep concern over the course of events in Cuba. We rejected the intervention of extra-continental powers in the affairs of this Hemisphere, warned of the subversive activities by the Castro Government as a threat to the peace of the continent, and excluded, as incompatible, the Marxist-Leninist Government of Cuba from participation in the inter-American system.

The current crisis presented the Americans with the gravest challenge we have faced since we agreed in 1947 upon measures for our collective security. By our decisive action we have demonstrated beyond doubt that our system is viable and that we possess the will and capacity to defend ourselves effectively. But the underlying

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source of tension in the Americas, the Marxist-Leninist Government of Cuba is an ally of the Sino-Soviet powers, remains.

Cuba's opportunity to return as a respected member of the inter-American community also remains. The choice is clear: one leads to eventual oblivion; the other promises independence and freedom. When the people of Cuba are given the opportunity to engage in free elections, elections based upon genuine political competition under full international supervision, in order that their government may reflect their wishes, we are confident they will choose to return to the community of free nations. And we shall welcome them.

Should the Marxist-Leninist Government of Cuba refuse this elementary right of all free peoples, we are equally

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equally confident that they will seek other methods to make their will known. The U. S. for its part, stands ready to recognize promptly and to provide assistance without rancor over past relationships to any democratic groups in Cuba that succeed in establishing a government responsive to the desires and aspirations of the Cuban people.

Until the Cuban people are assured that they can express themselves without fear, we stand united with the other nations of this Hemisphere, as never before, in our determination to adopt all suitable measures, short of the employment of organized military forces, to ensure that a government of demonstrated duplicity does not persist in our midst indefinitely. We are resolved that intervention in the internal affairs of an American state by extra-continental powers with their allies doctrine shall fail; and that the aims of the Marxist-Leninist Government of Cuba to promote its subversive activities in the Hemisphere by the threat or use of force shall not prosper.

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The fact was clear. It has never been and it is not ^{accomplish an end} the policy of this Government to overthrow the Castro regime ^{of Cuba} by military invasion. I made this clear in my press conference of September 13. It is also apparent from the congressional Joint Resolution of October 3. Invasion for this purpose would be inconsistent with our commitments under the Rio Treaty and the United Nations Charter. In reaffirming these commitments, I call attention to the fact that they make ample provision for individual or collective action in defense of our nation and the security of the hemisphere. These provisions have served us well during the past weeks and we do not now relinquish them.

On the other hand, because of the failure of the Cuban Government to cooperate in making arrangements there has been no on-site inspection of the removal of the offensive weapons and there are as yet no continuing safeguards against their reintroduction. Under these circumstances, there is no occasion for fresh assurances to the Cuban Government on the subject of invasion, nor can there be an end to air surveillance.

The prompt compliance by the USSR with that portion of its obligations concerning withdrawal of offensive weapons, the portion most directly under Soviet control, leads me to hope that progress may now be made on some of the broader problems of reduction of tensions mentioned in the published correspondence between me and Premier Khrushchev.

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